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ABSTRACT

A curriculum for a competency based teacher preparation course for home economics teachers who will be dealing with family life education is outlined. Required competencies in the following areas are described: (1) human development and values clarification; (2) family and group interaction; (3) preparation for marriage; (4) marriage; (5) parenthood; (6) alternative lifestyles; and (7) the family and the community and careers in family life. (JD)

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Competency-Based Materials in Family Life Teacher Education: Development, Implementation and Evaluation

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Competency-Based Materials in Family Life Teacher Education: Development, Implementation and Evaluation

The strength of our future families lies in the hands of today's youth. Problems of families today are based on the poor preparation of family members in such areas as development of intimate relationships, management of finances and economics, skills in parenting, and development of self-esteem. To prevent such problems in the family of the future, active change must take place. One means of preparing persons for future family roles is through our educational system. In order to accomplish effective family life education, teachers must be trained to teach family life education as well as meet the changing needs of their students in this area.

Development of Materials

In response to the changing needs of families and children in Texas, a statewide project was implemented to improve home economics teacher preparation. Competencies in all areas of home economics were developed by persons representing diverse areas and levels of the Texas education system. Materials were then developed to support the competencies identified. One component of this project was family life education. The Family Living Materials include study in values clarification and human development, group process, preparation for marriage, human sexuality, marriage development and communication, parenting, special problems and family crises, the effects of the community on the family, and careers in family life. The materials are flexible so that they can be used over a series of family life courses. Table I gives descriptions of each competency.

Implementation of Family Living Materials

The Family Living Materials were distributed to the 19 colleges and universities with accredited home economics teacher preparation programs.

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Family Living Competencies and Descriptions

Human Development and Values Clarification

- Competency 1: Ability to analyze various stages of human development.

  Reviews theories of development and factors that influence one's development. Identifies the process of value development and clarification.

Family and Group Interaction

- Competency 2: Ability to assess psychosocial dynamics of group relationships.

  Analyzes group interaction and identifies theories and skills of communication. Reviews functions of the family, family roles, and the effects of the family on individual relationships.

Preparation for Marriage

- Competency 3: Ability to assess realistically patterns of heterosexual love relationships.

  Analyzes male and female differences and sex roles. Identifies the process of forming love relationships and preparing for marriage.

Marriage

- Competency 4: Ability to analyze factors contributing to successful partnership as married persons.

  Discusses components of a satisfying marriage relationship as well as means of coping with conflict and stress and managing family interaction.

Parenthood

- Competency 5: Ability to assess components of responsible parenthood.

  Identifies factors in preparation for parenthood and analyzes techniques for effective parenting.

Alternative Life-styles

- Competency 6: Ability to analyze factors contributing to successful life-style as a single person.

  Describes adjustments and responsibilities of the single person. Compares various types of life-styles.

The Family and the Community and Careers in Family Life

- Competency 7: Ability to assess family interactions with societal institutions in the community.

  Competency 8: Ability to analyze career and job opportunities in the field of family life.

  Appraises the role of the family in society as well as the influences of society on the family. Identifies professional and parafessional career opportunities in the family field.

Instructors selected materials appropriate for courses being taught during the spring, 1978 semester. Components of the materials were explained by the project facilitator, and materials were then used in appropriate college courses.

Evaluation of Family Living Materials

The evaluational included field testing the family living materials and evaluating teacher and student acceptance of the competency-based family living materials. The study was designed to evaluate the effectiveness and acceptance of competency-based materials for family life teacher education through four approaches: (1) analysis of student gain scores on tests from the family living materials, (2) exploration of instructor and student judgements of the structure and content of the family living instructional materials using instructor and student rating scales, (3) assessment and correlation of instructor and student attitudes toward the materials using a semantic differential attitude scale, and (4) personal interviews with instructors using a structured interview.

In order to evaluate the materials from several different perspectives, appropriate hypotheses and research questions were established. Null hypotheses were used for those evaluation components which could be tested for significant differences. Research questions were structured for the more descriptive types of data. The null hypotheses were:

1. There is no significant difference at the .05 level between experimental group pre- and posttest gain scores and control group pre- and posttest gain scores.

2. There is no significant difference at the .05 level between experimental posttest only group scores and control posttest only group scores.

3. There is no significant correlation at the .05 level between student attitudes toward the materials, and instructor attitudes toward the materials.

Other issues explored in research questions were:

1. Do instructors judge the structure and content of the materials as usable and effective assessed by a mean rating of 2 or above on the Instructor Form for guide evaluation?

2. Do students judge the structure and content of the materials as usable and effective assessed by a mean rating of 2 or above on the Student Form for guide evaluation?

3. Do instructors and students reflect positive attitudes toward the materials assessed by ratings over the 50 percentile on the semantic differential Attitude Scale?

Sample

Thirteen instructor volunteers were identified from among the family living instructors at the 19 Texas universities with approved vocational home economics teacher education programs. Selection for participation was determined by the instructor's willingness to participate and by the instructor's course content for the spring semester, 1978. The 13 instructors with a student population of 484 represent 10 Texas colleges and universities.

Research Design

The research design consists of four components: (1) a quasi-experimental Solomon Four-Group, (2) computation and comparison of means, (3) a correlational component, and (4) interpretation of subjective interview data.

Results

This evaluation of family life competency-based materials documents significant gains achieved by students experiencing the materials in various Texas institutions and taught by diverse teachers. The study explored the attitudes and evaluation of the materials of both college and university instructors and students. The research found that instructors and students

had positive attitudes toward, and evaluations of, the materials. Students rated the materials lower than instructors, but showed parallel results.

Completion of Materials

The seven instructional guides in family living are now being revised and edited according to the data collected during the field-test process. Materials should be completed by fall, 1979, and will be available through the Home Economics Instructional Materials Center, Texas Tech University, Box 4067, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

The book of competencies, Basic Competencies for Beginning Teachers of Vocational Home Economics ($3.50) is now available through: Joanne Everts, Project Facilitator, Home Economics Competency-Based Curriculum Project; Dr. Billy N. Pope, Director, EPD Consortium for Northeast Texas, P. O. Box 1300, Richardson, Texas 75080.